

10 August 1951

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR

At the request of my colleague, Professor Bruce Hopper, I am sending you herewith a revised copy of his article on the Custine book. I am sure that Professor Hopper will appreciate very much the comments on his earlier draft which you recently forwarded to him.

WILLIAM L. LANGER
Assistant Director
National Estimates

attachment

25X1

DOCUMENT NO. 67
NO CHANGE IN CLASS. ☐
☒ DECLASSIFIED
CLASS. CHANGED TO: TS S C
NEXT REVIEW DATE: _____
AUTH: HR 70-2

--

AUG 10 1951
NE'S

8 August 1951

Professor Bruce C. Hopper
Harvard University
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Dear Professor Hopper:

Your scholarly review of Custine reached me through the kindness of Professor Langer and I found it extremely interesting. I have the impression that you, like myself, found the Marquis something of an enigma. It is really rather difficult to determine where in his character the keen observer begins and the literary charlatan ends.

There exists a review by Balzac of one of Custine's novels in which the great man states, in effect, that only Stendahl equalled Custine in insight. However, in a private letter, also still extant, Balzac hinted that he wrote this enthusiastic review in order to please the Duchess d'Abrantes and as far as he was concerned "anyone who had an income of two hundred thousand florines, as Custine had, was a great artist."

The fact remains, however, that one literally could take excerpts verbatim from his JOURNAL and use them as current commentaries on Soviet Russia. As a matter of fact, when Bullitt was in Moscow as Ambassador he did exactly this and his report, intended as a hoax, was received in good faith by the State Department.

Sincerely,

W. B. Smith

W. B. Smith

cc: Dr. Langer ✓

AUG 8 1951
NE-7